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THE ARRANGEMENTS WITH IRELAND CONSIDERED.

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THE

ARRANGEMENTS, &c.

THE ſpirit of commerce, by making the many leſs dependent on the few, gradually overturned the maſſy fabrick of the feudral conſtitutions. The progreſs of this ſpirit has, even in the ſhort period of the preſent century, ſoftened the temper of every European government. And it was the ſilent prevalence of this ſpirit, more perhaps than the avowed operations of deſign, which, during late times, prompted ſo many requeſts on the part of Ireland and dictated ſo many grants by Great Britain.

That much has been aſked at different times and much has been given will not be

regretted by thoſe, who wiſh to ſee fellow ſubjects enjoy equal privileges; or by thoſe, who value above all things the bleſſings of domeſtic quiet within a convulſed Empire. It is only to be lamented, that what was at laſt done, was not deciſively done, on the fair principles of mutual advantage and laſting contentment.

If we briefly review the reſtraints, which had been impoſed formerly by our mercantile avarice more than by our political jealouſy; if we ſhortly conſider the relief which has been given, during the laſt ſeven years, by our apprehenſions, more than by our policy; if we compare the extent of what Ireland actually enjoys with the little that is now withheld; we ſhall ſee the truth of that regret in the beſt light, and probably determine, that there is now nothing in conteſt between the ſiſter kingdoms, which can poſſibly counter-balance the diſagreeableneſs of future altercation, the pleaſures of promiſed concord, and the profit of equal induſtry, directed to one common end.

In

In 1778, which may be regarded as the period of rigour and the beginning of conceſſion, the produce of Ireland, except woollens, cottons, and hats, glaſs, hops, gunpowder, and coals, were allowed to be exported * to the Britiſh Colonies in America, and to the Britiſh ſettlements in Africa. Iron too was permitted, on paying ſpecified duties. And foreign manufactures, which had been imported through England into Ireland for her own conſumption, were equally allowed to be tranſported to the ſame diſtant markets.

To enable us to judge of the value of what was then given, or withheld, we ought to recollect, that this act only reſtored ancient rights, without conferring new ones. All this and more might have been lawfully done from the commencement of colonization to the epoch of the reſtoration: All this was permitted to be done,

* By 18 Geo. III. ch. 25. But the articles, which were then excepted were allowed by the 20 Geo. III. ch. 10, for opening the Colony Trade.

by

by the act of navigation itſelf *. Even the law, which in the firſt inſtance, excluded Ireland from the unreſtrained trade of our diſtant dominions, allowed ſervants, horſes and victuals to be ſent from Ireland to our colonies †; and to theſe articles linens were added by the 3 and 4 of An. ch. 8.—If we reflect, that the Iriſh exports of proviſions and linen alone amounted yearly to 3,250,000*l* while the annual value of the whole exported products of Ireland was only 3,500,000*l* ‡, we ſhall not probably think, that many of the reſtraints on that eſſential right of every community, to make the moſt of its own advantages, were even then withdrawn.

When the embargoes and embarraſſments of the war filled up at length the meaſure of Ireland's diſtreſſes; when the Iriſh aſked plainly for a free trade as an adequate relief

* See 12 ch. 2. ch. 18.

† By 15 ch. 2. ch. 7.

‡ See Mr. Young's tour in Ireland, Apen. p. 144.

from

from commercial burdens, we relinquiſhed much, but did not grant a free trade.

In 1779 indeed we had allowed the importation of tobacco, being the growth of Ireland, under the like duties and regulations as American tobacco, when imported into Britain. A regard to our own manufactures more than to theirs had induced us at the ſame time to grant a bounty on the import of Iriſh hèmp into this kingdom *.

But it was not till 1780, that after much delay, without much conſideration, we reſtored to Ireland an equal trade to the Britiſh colonies in Africa and America †; including the export of her woollens, which it had been the object of ſo many laws to prevent. We allowed too a direct commerce between Ireland and the Levant, by perſons free of the Levant Company. And the gold and ſilver coins, which the Iriſh abſentees were ſuppoſed to have brought into England were now permitted to be ſent back to Ireland ‡.

* By 19 Geo. III. ch. 37.
† By 20 Geo. III, ch. 10.
‡ For all which ſee 20 Geo. III, ch. 13.

This

This then is the amount of what may be called Lord North's conceſſions to Ireland. Whatever diſadvantage may have reſulted from them to Britain he merits the blame :— Whatever good flowed from them to Ireland he equally deſerves her praiſe. Certain however it is, that after all Ireland did not enjoy compleatly the plantation trade : For a people, who cannot diſpoſe of the commodities, which remain after domeſtic conſumption is ſatisfied, cannot conſume at the cheapeſt rate ; ſince every ultimate diſadvantage muſt be conſidered by the ſupplier both in buying and ſelling: Now, Ireland was ſtill reſtrained, by an act * paſſed only eight years before, from ſending out of her own ports the colony produce to Britain. The domeſtic manufactures of Ireland continued ſtill to be loaded with many burdens, and her traffick with foreign countries to be prevented by a thouſand obſtructions. To take away with one hand what is given by the

* 12 Geo. III. ch. 55.

other,

other, can never merit the praiſe of liberality, however it may be contemned as equally inconſiſtent with plain dealing as it is with ſound policy.

Amidſt her ſubſequent embarraſſements Ireland thought, what no one who loves freedom will blame her for thinking, that ſhe could manage beſt her own affairs her own way. With this view, ſhe aſked for a free legiſlature; for a parliament over which no other parliament ſhould be paramount. And Mr. Fox propoſed in 1782, and cauſed to be enacted a law * for repealing the ſtatute of the 6th of Geo. I. which ſecured the dependency of Ireland. But, with all his renown for promptitude and deciſiveneſs he did not grant all that was aſked, or at leaſt what was regarded in Ireland as effectual to the end. And he once more eſſayed his legiſlative talents, by carrying through in the ſubſequent year, an act † for declaring, *that the right claimed by the people of Ireland to be bound by laws made in*

* 22 Geo. III. ch. 53. † 23 Geo. III. ch. 28.

their own Parliment, and to have all lawſuits decided finally in their own courts, ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever. The declaration made thus to Ireland, *that your legiſlature ſhall in future be free,* though a ſimple propoſition, contained many conſequences, that were by no means apparent to every one, and that were perhaps not all foreſeen, by the author of the Iriſh revolution. For, the energy of the Britiſh legiſlature being thus withdrawn, all Britiſh acts of legiſlation ceaſed to operate in Ireland: Neither reſtrictions nor facilities, which had flowed from a fountain, that no longer flowed, could any more adminiſter either good or evil to Ireland. If any miſchief has reſulted to Britain from theſe meaſures, Mr. Fox merits the blame: whatever benefits have reſulted to Ireland he equally merits her commendations. We ſhall probably find by no long inquiry, that ſome advantages and many inconveniencies did reſult from the before mentioned meaſures; owing to a real want of foreſight in the authors of them, and to the conſequent want of ſyſtem, both in the object and the means.

The

The change itſelf may have indeed produced ſome inconvenience to Ireland firſt, and to Britain afterwards. But, it was the inadequateneſs of the inconſiderate modes to the beforementioned ends, which gave riſe to the recent diſputes and dangers, both commercial and political. Lord North (as we have ſeen) avowedley opened to Ireland the trade to our Colonies: Mr. Fox virtually extended the Iriſh commerce with foreign nations: yet, both theſe miniſters left the trade and navigation between the Siſter Kingdoms, which, conſidering their relationſhip and proximity, ought to be the moſt free, obnoxious to many diſputes and liable to ſome obſtructions. The Iriſh naturally inferred, that when a thing is given, all muſt neceſſarily be given, without which the ſame thing cannot be enjoyed. When they found moreover their Portugal trade embarraſſed, their jealouſy traced up the cauſe to the ſame temper, which, after pretending to give the whole had only given a part. They feared, that the admitting freely into Britain without a duty the proviſions of Ire-

land would operate as a tax upon their own conſumption. They complained, that the prohibiting by high duties the importation of their woollens and other ſtuffs into Britain, while they excluded from their markets foreign goods of the ſame kind, ſhewed a diſpoſition to oppreſs, without benefitting the oppreſſors themſelves: and that the allowing of drawbacks on the export of Britiſh refined ſugars, ſailcloth and cottons, amounted to a tax on their inconſiderable manufactures of the ſame kind. To quiet theſe complaints, by removing or obviating the chief cauſe of them, no proviſion ſeems to have been made either by Lord North, or Mr. Fox; ſince no inquiries were certainly made by either of them into the real ſtate of the manufactures of both countries, in order to remove the jealouſies of tradeſmen, by putting the manufactures and buſineſs of all upon an equitable footing; and by getting in return ſome ſecurity for future ſatisfaction.

To the beforementioned cauſes may be truly referred the deſire of protecting duties and

and equalizing drawbacks, which have been inſiſted on, together with aſſociations of non-importation of Britiſh manufactures, which were actually executed with no ſmall effect, when legal modes of redreſs had been denied. And while Britain began to enjoy all the bleſſings of returning peace, Ireland fell back into an abyſs of deeper diſtractions, and ſeemed ready to ſeek relief even from the miſeries of civil war.

The diſturbances of Ireland, which thus plainly aroſe from large conceſſions without previous concert, and from a poſitive admiſſion of independence without any agreement of future aid, were bequeathed with other ſimilar legacies by the late miniſters to the preſent. Of this ſtate the whole nation felt the unhappineſs, and every one wiſhed for an inveſtigation of the true cauſes of thoſe diſorders, that effectual remedies might be ſought. The wiſhes of the public were doubleſs complied with, by much inquiry firſt, and by much conſideration afterwards. Were we to judge from actual effects more than from public report, we may infer, that

thoſe

thoſe perſons who knew beſt the affairs of Ireland and were intruſted with her intereſts, have been conſulted with regard to the origin of the diſeaſe as well as to the efficacy of the cure.

Of the Iriſh Paliament it cannot be aſſerted, as of the American Congreſs, that when oppreſſed by their grievances they declined to trace up their ſufferings to the true ſource, to avow their real object, and to point out plainly ſuch means as would be fully adequate to the end of removing real diſtreſs and preventing after jealouſies. To juſtify this remark it is unneceſſary to recapitulate the addreſſes of the Iriſh Parliament, during the laſt ſeven years. It is ſufficient to mention the Reſolves, which were entered into, on the 7th of February, 1785, by the Iriſh Commons, with ſuch apparent ſincerity and zeal, *for encouraging and extending the trade between Great Britain and Ireland, and for ſettling the intercourſe and commerce between them on permanent and equitable principles, in order to promote the mutual benefit of both countries.*

Whether

Whether theſe are objects of the higheſt importance to the general intereſt of the Britiſh Empire, what unprejudiced perſon can doubt? As the Parliamentary Reſolutions of a ſiſter kingdom, they merit the higheſt attention; as propoſals directed to the moſt uſeful end, they deſerve the moſt candid diſcuſſion; and as meaſures which lead directly to the peaceful ſettlement of a diſtracted Empire upon a digeſted plan of ſyſtematic government, theſe propoſals ought to be ſupported by every wiſe and good man, were they leſs juſt in their principle and leſs ſalutary in their means.

Though the ſpecifick propoſals of the Iriſh Parliament have been detailed, for the ſake of perſpicuity, into ten reſolutions, they may be conſidered under three diſtinct heads: 1ſt, As they tend to affect our domeſtic manufactures; 2dly, As they will probably enlarge or diminiſh the foreign trade of both; and 3dly, as the public burthen may be lightened at preſent, or leſſened in future, were theſe reſolves ſubſtantially adopted. It is propoſed to ſpeak briefly of

each

each of theſe points, according to the foregoing arrangement.

1. Whether admitting the products and manufactures of the ſiſter kingdoms mutually in to each other, without paying any other duty than the loweſt duty, which maybe payable on importation in either country, except where an internal duty may have already been impoſed on the ſame article of the importing country, is doubtleſs a queſtion of great importance, which merits ſerious diſcuſſion. The general propoſal plainly is, that the products and manufactures of both kingdoms ſhall be mutually imported and conſumed, with as little burthen, and as equally as poſſible. And to this it is objected: *That the advantage of cheap proviſions, low wages, and no taxes, muſt enable the Iriſh manufacturer to underſel the Engliſh at every market, not excepting our own, particularly in woollens.* The objector evidently borrowed his documents from Lord Sheffield's *Obſervations on the Iriſh Trade*, without adverting, how clearly the noble author hath proved, *that at the time Ireland, on the opening*

of

*of her ports for exportation of woollens, made an effort to ſend the greateſt quantity to foreign markets, ſhe increaſed her imports of woollens from England: That Ireland is hardly in a ſituation to agree to that propoſal; as Great Britain could underſell her in moſt manufactures; ſuch is the predominancy of ſupreme ſkill, induſtry and capitals, over low priced labour, and comparatively very few taxes.** The queſtion then is anſwered, as far as Lord Sheffield may be allowed to anſwer it.

But let us attend to the reaſon of the thing. It is unneceſſary on this occaſion, to revive the famous controverſy; *Whether a poor country, where raw materials and proviſions are cheap, and wages low, can ſupplant the trade of a rich manufacturing country, where raw materials and proviſions are dear, and the price of labour high:* This point has been ſo decidedly ſettled in favour of the rich manufacturing country by Dean Tucker, that it can be now only brought forward by ignorance, or intereſt, or faction. Let

* See obſervations on the Iriſh Trade, p. 13, 19.

us only conſider the caſe of two individual manufacturers ſettled in the ſame neighbourhood, a rich one and a poor one: The rich one, being already poſſeſſed of capital, credit, and cuſtomers, can plainly buy his materials at the cheapeſt rate, work them up in the beſt manner, becauſe he can give the beſt wages to the beſt workmen, and diſpoſe of his finiſhed goods more readily and lower than the poor one: If the rich manufacturer employs a capital of £. 2000, and the poor one only £. 200, the rich manufacturer, by gaining ten per Cent. or £. 200 a year, can live comfortably; but the poor tradeſman muſt gain 20 per Cent. or £. 40 a year, before he can live at all: Conſequently the rich manufacturer muſt be always able to underſel the poor one 10 per Cent. on every article. Every manufacturer, however opulent and eſtabliſhed he may now be, muſt remember the many difficulties he had to encounter in his youth, when he met his richer neighbour in every market, whether in buying his materials, in employing the moſt expert workmen,

workmen, or in ſelling his goods: And he may recollect perhaps with pleaſure, that it required a life of patience, attention, and induſtry, to ſurmount every difficulty, attending a too powerful competition, and to become himſelf rich.

A manufacturing town is compoſed of ſuch individuals, whoſe active competitions promote the proſperity and riches of their neighbourhood. A ſimilar competition may prevail between a rich manufacturing town and a poor one: But, has Bolton yet overcome Mancheſter? Has Roachdale overpowered Leeds? Or, has Walſal eclipſed the ſkill, and induſtry, and opulence of Birmingham? It is on the other hand known and underſtood, that all the little towns, which ſtand within a ten miles circle of Mancheſter, Leeds, and Birmingham, are the mere inſtruments belonging to theſe capitals of their reſpective manufactures.

Of ſuch towns and villages is a manufacturing province or kingdom compoſed; who may in the ſame manner, as a province or kingdom, enter into competition with each

other. But, has Wales or Scotland, notwithſtanding their ſuppoſed advantages of cheap materials and low-priced labour, yet carried away the Woollen Manufacture from England? The truth is, England was and is in poſſeſſion (a point of great conſequence in every thing) of ſuperior wealth, which ſhe had gained, not by war, or by mines of gold and ſilver, but by ages of attention and induſtry; of eſtabliſhed credit and extenſive correſpondences; of the ſkill and experience, that reſulted from all theſe; and of the diviſion of labour, which naturally takes place in the progreſs of manufacture; and which enables the workmen not only to labour ſkillfully but to ſell cheaply.

Of all theſe advantages Ireland is doubtleſs in ſome degree poſſeſt. But, the nature of the queſtion ſuppoſes a great inferiority, otherwiſe there would be no reaſon for apprehenſion. Of the ſtate of Ireland, in reſpect of lowneſs of labour, habits of induſtry, cheapneſs of living, and extent of capital, it may be proper however to inquire a little more minutely.

If

If it is allowed, that there are two millions and a half of people in Ireland; it will be equally admitted that the two millions are Roman Catholics, and that the half million are Proteſtants. The Proteſtants reſide chiefly in the North and are principally employed in carrying on the Linen Manufactures. It is a remarkable fact in the œconomy of theſe tradeſmen, that each occupies a little farm, which he cultivates in due ſeaſon, though he may be obliged to ſtop the loom, in order to follow the plough. And his capital and his time are conſequently directed to a different employment from his real buſineſs. He is therefore neither ſo good a farmer, nor manufacturer, as if he employed his undivided attention and money to one object. This fact alone evinces, that induſtry has not ariſen to that ſtate of improvement, even among the moſt induſtrious of the Iriſh manufacturers, which reſults from the diviſion of labour; conſiſting as this happy circumſtance does, in the workmen applying attentively to one buſineſs only and even ſolely to one branch of this buſineſs. But, no

cheapneſs

cheapneſs of labour can compenſate for the before-mentioned diſtraction of employment: And no attention and ſkill can enter into conteſt for cheapneſs with the machines which have been introduced into England; as we may learn from the deciſive ſucceſs of the great works for the ſpinning of cotton. The price of wages have riſen about one fourth *, during the laſt twenty years, in both kingdoms; which remarkable fact ſufficiently evinces, that both hold an equal pace in improvements and in wealth. Common labour is little more than one third of what it is in England; yet it is very extraordinary, that Maſons, Carpenters, Thatchers, and ſuch artizans ſhould be paid nearly as much in Ireland as in England; though it muſt be acknowledged, that the wages of manufacture is a good deal lower in Ireland than in England; while the rates of living are in the firſt country to the laſt as eleven to fourteen. But, in forming ſuch eſtimates we ought always to conſider

* Mr. Young's tour, Apen.

whether

whether ſuperior ſkill and induſtry are not an ample compenſation for higher wages. The common ditcher of Norfolk would be a cheaper labourer at eighteen-pence a day, than the ſtouteſt Patagonian at two-pence. If Ireland, from whatever cauſe, ſhould in future advance in her trade and manufactures with quicker ſteps than Britain, the price of wages will riſe in the ſame proportion; becauſe it is not the actual wealth in any country which raiſes the value of labour; but the greater demand for labour from more frequent employments. The competition, which will ſoon ariſe between the linen and woollen manufacturers, between the workers in ſilk and workers in cotton, muſt neceſſarily raiſe the price of every kind of labour: For, workmen never fail to purſue that buſineſs, which brings them the greateſt wages. Two very important truths ought however never to be forgotten, in forming ſuch compariſons: the general induſtry of no people can ever exceed what their capital can employ: no regulation of commerce can any where increaſe the quantity

tity of induſtry, beyond what the capital of the country can maintain; though ſuch a regulation may divert the employment of it to a buſineſs leſs advantageous than that to which it would have naturally gone; ſeveral examples of which may be found in Ireland.

The foregoing reaſonings and facts apply chiefly to the manufacturing proteſtants of Ireland. With regard to the great body of the Iriſh people, the Roman Catholicks, it has been juſtly remarked, that the whole tenor of the Iriſh law neceſſarily tended not ſo much to convert them from their errors, as to beggar their fortunes; to depreſs them by a ſenſe of hopeleſs penury; and to render them indolent and inattentive by putting them in conſtant remembrance, that they could not better their condition by any efforts. But, the prevalence of liberality hath induced the legiſlatures of both kingdoms to relax a little in their favour. And the Roman catholicks of Ireland may now take leaſes, or buy lands, though not even now with the freedom of proteſtants. The

deſire

deſire of every man to become an owner of a portion of his country is the great realizer of mercantile capital. Whether the late freedom, which has been juſtly given to the Roman catholicks, will therefore promote the advantage of agriculture, or the intereſts of manufacture, in Ireland, may admit of ſome doubt. A very competent judge has certainly determined * after great inquiry, that money laid out upon the improvement of the unimproved lands of Ireland would yield from fifteen to twenty per cent profit, beſides other advantages. But, amidſt the preſent competitions of the mercantile world, what merchant or manufacturer, can expect to make more then ten per cent. by his buſineſs? It would however require (according to the ſame judge) five pounds ſterling to be expended on every acre Engliſh, amounting to 88,341,136l. to built, fence, drain, plant and improve Ireland, in the ſame manner as the face of England is improved. It would require twenty ſhillings an acre more, amounting to above twenty millions, to ſtock the farms of Ireland, like thoſe of

D Eng-

* Mr. A. Young's Tour in Ireland, Apendl. p. 20.

England. Here then is a permanent drain, which may carry off the whole accumulations of the mercantile capital of Ireland and probably will draw off many of them. Happy for Ireland will it be, if ſhe ſhall thus lay out the ſurpluſſes of her ſtock, in improveing her own fields, in preference to the more ſplendid and precarious expenditure on Weſt India eſtates. Nor, is this evil much to be dreaded by the Iriſh patriot, or feared by the Engliſh partyman. The Iriſh Parliament, by giving bounties on the land-carriage of corn to Dublin, have incited a vigorous ſpirit of tillage, though to the diminution indeed of paſturage and the loſs of manufacture. It is not likely then that the mercantile ſurpluſſes of Iriſh ſtock will ſoon accumulate faſter than thoſe of Britiſh ſtock. Were we to ſuppoſe, what might eaſily be proved, that the mercantile capital of Britain is to the mercantile capital of Ireland as a hundred is to one: Were we to ſuppoſe, that the mercantile capitals of both increaſe with the vigour of compound intereſt: It would ſurely require no deep calculation to prove, how

how much faſter the capital of Britain muſt neceſſarily augment than the capital of Ireland.

It is nevertheleſs ſaid by ſome, and feared by others, that were we to ratify the mutual freedom of manufacture, which the Iriſh have propoſed, the labour, the ſkill, and capital of Britain would emigrate to Ireland. If it be thereby meant, that the mere artificers would retire to Ireland to get leſs wages than they now receive at home, this is ſurely no probable ſuppoſition. If it be imagined, that the moſt ſkilful artiſans would be tempted by high rewards to manage the manufactures of Ireland and inſtruct the ignorant, this is only ſaying, that the Iriſh will do that hereafter, which they have always done, without perceiveably injuring Britiſh fabricks; becauſe in proportion to the charges of the maſter, muſt the goods be enhanced to the conſumer; and it has been ſeldom found from experience, that the tradeſman, who has been tempted from his native country by high wages, has long preſerved his morals. He who aſſerts, that mercantile

capital may eaſily be transferred from one country to another, has perhaps no clear conception what mercantile capital is. Credit, and correſpondences, are as much capital as caſh. Every manufacturer may certainly carry off his caſh: But, he cannot tranſport with him to a ſtrange land the good opinion of his neighbours, from which he derived ſo many benefits in the purchaſe of his raw materials; or the favours of his cuſtomers, which formed the chief vent for his finiſhed goods. The Proteſtant weavers of Ireland, who uſed to emigrate to America (the Roman Catholics never emigrated) are ſaid to have carried away large ſums of money; but, they tranſported nothing elſe: They found themſelves among ſtrangers, without credit or friends. And they retired into the wilderneſs, where they followed the plough, but forgot the loom. He who has made a capital, by purſuing a particular object will not quit that object to look for another: He who has inherited a capital from the induſtry of his father will not ſend his property

property to a place where he does not chuſe to reſide. And were we to appeal to experience we ſhould probably be convinced, that no capital having been ſent to cut the canals or work the colieries of Ireland, which have ſo long languiſhed, notwithſtanding public ſupport, none will be tranſmitted in future for ſimilar purpoſes.

But with regard to the general ſubject, a few authentic facts will be more ſatisfactory than a thouſand ſpeculations. The linen trade between the ſiſter kingdoms, has, for almoſt a century, exiſted in that free and equal ſtate, which is now propoſed for every other product, and manufacture of both. Yet, Britiſh linens have flouriſhed notwithſtanding the unlimited competition of the Iriſh; as we may infer from the ſubjoined details :*

	Imported	Re-exported
According to a 5 years average ending with 1756, there were - - -	31,561,536 yds.	7,524,346 yds,
Ditto ending with 1771, only - - - - -	24,983,477	8,245,793

* Reports of the Linen Committee, quoted by Mr. A. Young, in Pol. Arithmetic, p. 315-16.

And

And thus it appears, that the domeſtic manufacture increaſed, by the diminution of the quantity of linen, which was imported, and by the augmentation of the quantity, which was afterwards ſent out. A good deal of Britiſh linen was ſent to Ireland. But, the increaſe of the Britiſh linens, notwithſtanding the Iriſh competition, will appear ſtill plainer, from a fair compariſon of the quantities of Britiſh and Iriſh linens, which have been exported from England.

	Britiſh Linens.	Iriſh Linens.
According to a ſeven years average, ending with 1755 -	576,373, yds.	772,245 yds.
Ditto Ending with 1762 -	1,355,266	1,985,825
Ditto Ending with 1769 -	2,423,664	2,033,414
in 1770 -	3,210,506	2,707,482
in 1771 -	4,411,040	3,450,221

The foregoing detail ſhews clearly enough that the Britiſh linens have greatly proſpered, though they had the Iriſh for unreſtrained competitors, and even entered into competition with the Iriſh in the Iriſh markets. And this deciſive truth will ſtill more plainly appear, from a more minute

nute ſtatement of the Scots linen, becauſe Scotland is much more analagous to Ireland, in her ſkill, induſtry, and capital, than England. An Act of Parliament was paſſed, in 1727, for encouraging the linen manufacture in Scotland. From that epoch the progreſs of this valuable manufacture has been prodigious, as appears from the ſubjoined detail.*

		Yards.
Linen ſtamped for ſale in Scotland according		
to a 5 years average, ending with -	1733 -	3,488,232
Ditto - - -	1742 -	4,673,3 3
Four years ending -	1751 -	7,543,075
	in 1754 -	8,914,369
	in 1774 -	11,422,115

Yet the Iriſh linens, amounting to fifteen million of yards, entered freely into competition with the Scots, in the domeſtic market, and were entitled to the ſame bounties on the exportation. And this ſeems to be a fair anſwer of the queſtion, by actual experiment, the beſt of all trials.

It

* And. Chron. Com. 2 vol. p. 400-9.

It having in this ſatisfactory manner appeared, that the Britiſh manufacturers have nothing to fear from the competition of the Iriſh fabricks, it is proper to enquire, what are the proper manufactures of Ireland, which may be imported into Britain, even as the law now ſtands: We ſhall immediately find, that linen, and linen yarn, bay yarn, cotton yarn, beef, pork, bacon, butter, hydes, calf-ſkins, and live cattle, may be imported from Ireland duty free: That woollen cloths, ſtuffs of ſilks and cotton rugs, and fringe may be brought in, on paying a duty: And that cheeſe, and ſalt, unleſs for ſhips uſe, are alone prohibited.

Of the firſt claſs, namely, ſuch articles as may even now be legally imported, whatever may be their value (and their value amounts to nineteen twentieths of the whole imported goods) there is at preſent no diſpute, ſince experience hath decided in their favour.

As to the ſecond claſs, conſiſting of woollen cloths; of ſtuffs of ſilk and cotton; and

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of rugs and frizes; all theſe may be now imported into Britain, on paying a duty which amounts to a prohibition; the ſame articles are admitted into Ireland from Britain on paying a duty of 5 per cent. of the value; and foreign goods of the ſame kind are excluded from Ireland by prohibitory duties. It is apparent, that Ireland now may equally prohibit Britiſh woollens and admit the foreign, when ſhe can get them cheaper; which anſwers the objection, *that we give every thing and receive nothing in return*. True indeed Britain may equally give a preference to foreign linens over the Iriſh. But, would ſuch a conteſt be for the intereſt or happineſs of Britain, or of Ireland? The true queſtion then is, whether the woollens, cottons, or ſilks of Ireland, could rival the Britiſh in the markets of Britain, were they freely admitted, burdened only with freight and inſurance, Cuſtom-houſe fees and factorage, to the amount of 8 or 10 per cent. The general argument, whether the poor country can enter into ſucceſsful rivalry with an opulent one, has been already

diſcuſſed and plainly decided in favour of the rich Manufacturing Country. But, to leave no doubt on any one's mind, it is now neceſſary to examine the point more minutely as to the woollens, ſilks, and cottons of England and Ireland.

The general aſpect of the manufactures of both countries appears to be this—The woollens predominate in Britain — The linens predominate in Ireland. From the plenty of the raw material and the encouragements of the legiſlature the woollens of England, at an early epoch, took poſſeſſion of the country and ſo fully occupied the induſtrious claſſes that it always proved a too powerful competitor to the feebler fabrick of linen, of cotton, and of ſilk. On the other hand, the linen manufacture of Ireland, from the convenience of the country and the encouragement of the legiſlature has grown up to great magnitude, has fully employed the induſtrious claſſes there, however few they may be when compared with the whole people, and continues from it particular advantages to oppreſs the ſilk

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the cotton, and woollen. The Iriſh woollens moreover labour under a conſiderable diſadvantage peculiar to themſelves. The whole iſland does not produce a ſufficient quantity of wool to ſupply the demand of the home market. Owing to the public encouragements to agriculture the great ſheep walks of Carlow, Tipperaray, and Roſcommon have been converted into tillage. And thus the quantity of wool, which was originally too little has by this means become leſs. Of conſequence the price of wool in Ireland is from 45 to 50 per cent. higher than it is in England, the price being as about ten to ſix. In this country the value of the raw material is ſuppoſed to be about one third of the whole coſt of the cloth: In that country the amount of the raw material is two thirds * of the whole charges of

* Mr. A. Young ſtates the price of an Iriſh ball of Wool, during 1778, in this manner:

Combing and ſpinning	—	0 1	$0\frac{3}{4}$
The Wool —	—	0 2	$5\frac{1}{4}$
Whole coſt		0 3	6

See much good information on this ſubject in his Iriſh Tour, the Appendix throughout.

the manufacture. Here then is a natural and permanent diſadvantage attending the woollen manufacture of Ireland, which can never be counter-balanced by the low price of labour, affected as it more and more muſt be by the competitions of linen, ſilk, and cotton fabrics, that are preſſed forward in the ſame country. Under ſuch diſadvantages is it likely that the woollens of Ireland can enter into ſucceſsful competition with the woollens of England? If the linens of Ireland did not (as we have ſeen) depreſs the linens of Scotland, is it reaſonable to conclude, that the woollens of Ireland can rival the woollens of England, which, notwithſtanding the competition of Europe, have riſen up to a vaſt magnitude, ſince the commencement of the preſent century; as we may learn more minutely from the ſubjoined detail: The whole value of exported woollens, according to a five years

Average, ending with	1705	£2,579,478
Ditto	with 1775	4,384,942

It is however ſaid—*to be aſtoniſhing how Ireland has increaſed her woollen trade within theſe*

theſe few years. It is doubtleſs true, that ſince Lord North allowed the export of Iriſh wollens to our Colonies, and Mr. Fox laid open the foreign trade of Ireland, ſhe has exported thoſe woollens openly, which ſhe formerly did ſecretly: And ſhe manufactures now what ſhe always manufactured, poplins and tabinets, which cannot rival England, while England ſhall continue not to make them. But, it is an acknowledged fact, that while Ireland has been thus ſending her peculiar woollens to foreigners, ſhe has imported a greater quantity of Engliſh woollens for her own wear. This deciſive fact might be ſufficiently proved (were any proof wanting) by the ſubjoined detail:—

Of Britiſh woollens there were imported into Ireland, according to a ſeven years average,	New Drapery. yds.	Old Drapery. yds.
ending with 1770 —	331,548	205,662
Ditto according to a five years average ending the 25 March 1784,	376,719	316,625

This authentick account ought to outweigh a thouſand arguments and ought therefore to calm

calm every apprehenſion on the ſubject of woollens.

But, of Iriſh ſilks and cottons little has yet been ſaid, far leſs proved. The Iriſh have certainly tried to introduce and ſupport theſe manufactures, during the laſt twenty years; though without much ſucceſs. Had public boards in Ireland done leſs and private men been able to do more, the national efforts had been more ſucceſsful. It is unneceſſary to repeat arguments, which are equally applicable to cotton and ſilk, as they were before to wollen and linen. And every reaſonable perſon will be ſooner ſatisfied by a fair appeal to facts. With this purpoſe the following details are ſubmitted to every ones judgement:—

There were imported from England into Ireland, according to a thirteen years average		Manufactured ſilk. lb.	Raw ſilk. lb.	Ribband. lb.
ending with	— 1764	—15,760	— 48,132	— 275
Dito with	— 1777	—18,200	— 45,990	— 1,068
Five years aver. with	Mar. 1784	—19,164	— 41,606	— 1,538

There

There were imported into Ireland of Britiſh manufactured linen, cotton, and ſilk, according to a		Value of
ſeven years average, ending with —	1770—	£ 16,784
Ditto ending with ———	1777—	25,208
Ditto 5 years ending with March —	1784—	88,948

The foregoing details by no means exhibit the Iriſh manufactures of cotton and ſilk in an increaſing ſtate; though ſome, if not all of the five laſt years were a good deal leſſened in value by the non-importation agreements of the Iriſh populace. It is the laudable object of the late propoſals to prevent in future all ſuch irregular modes of redreſs or fluctuations of Trade, by removing preſent grievances and preventing future ones. We may judge what expectations are formed from the adoption of theſe propoſals, by a fact, which is very well underſtood on Change, that there are conſiderable orders for Britiſh goods now in the city from Ireland to be executed on the ſuppoſition, that the equity of theſe propoſals will enſure their acceptance.

Having thus minutely examined the great branches of the trade with Ireland, without

out touching the ſmaller ones, it may be now proper to take a ſlight but ſatisfactory view of our general commerce, with Ireland, both before the Iriſh were allowed to traffick with all the world, and ſince.

			Value of Exports.	Value of Imports.
There were exported and imported to and from England and Ireland, goods valued, according to a ten year average, ending with		1776	£.1,818,595	£.1,032,436
Ditto	with	1780	1,897,001	1,412,130
Ditto	in	1781	1,782,364	1,433,788
	in	1782	1,665,531	1,348,559
	in	1783	2,161,815	1,499,229

Now, what is there in this view of a great ſubject, from the cuſtom-houſe books, that can diſcourage any one? And the foregoing reaſonings and authentic facts, have been thus ſubmitted to the reader's judgement, to enable him to determine how far the manufactures of Ireland can enter into effectual competition with the ſimilar manufactures of Britain, loaded

as

as the Iriſh muſt come to market, with additional charges, to no ſmall amount.

2. It is propoſed in the next place to conſider, how far the foreign trade of both kingdoms is likely to be affected by the late propoſals, were they adopted, as the means of promoting the permanent intereſt of both countries.

We ſhall both ſhorten the enquiry, and more eaſily comprehend the reaſoning, if we throw out of the queſtion every thing which does not belong to it.

The Iriſh may now trade with the Britiſh Plantations in Africa and America, from Lord North's commercial conceſſions. This point is not diſputed. From Mr. Fox's political conceſſions, the Iriſh may regulate and purſue their commerce with foreign powers, as they may think it convenient to themſelves. Of this there can be no doubt. Having in purſuance of this right imported any of the products of Europe, the Iriſh may afterwards export ſuch products to Britain; under a decided conſtruction of the act of navigation, and the

eſtabliſhed practice, ſubſequent to ſuch deciſion. Of this then there can be no diſpute. Under Lord North's conceſſions too, the Iriſh may import part of a cargo from the Britiſh Weſt Indies, and ſend forward the other part of it in the ſame ſhip to Britain. Neither is there any heſitation about this practice. What is it then that the Iriſh cannot do under the preſent laws? They cannot it ſeems import directly the produce of Africa and America into Ireland, and ſend it, after being there put on ſhore, to any Britiſh port: This therefore is all that they cannot at preſent lawfully do: And from this reſtriction they would doubtleſs be freed, were the propoſed regulations adopted.

Among the thouſand evils, wherewith the removing of this vexatious reſtraint from a free trade, is ſaid to be pregnant, the principal one is, *That it would overthrow the act of navigation.* Were the Iriſh propoſals to be attended with any ſuch conſequence, it would indeed be a ſerious objection to them. But, in order to determine properly, whether this is a valid objection,

jection, or a mere pretence, let us take two diſtinct views of the navigation act; 1ſt, As its principle and proviſions have a tendency to promote the foreign trade and domeſtic opulence of the people; and 2dly, As its principle and proviſions tend to create many ſhips and ſailors, as a nurſery, from which future navies may be manned.

As to the firſt view of this important ſubject; it need ſcarcely be remarked, that Sir Matthew Decker conſidered the act of navigation as a mere monopoly, which ought to be removed, to make way for a freer trade. For, he inſiſted, that by confining the freights to one ſet of men, namely, Britiſh ſhipping and ſailors, imported goods were neceſſarily ſold dearer, and the products of the country, which were to be ſent out, were in the ſame manner likely to be purchaſed, by the exporter, ſo much cheaper. Doctor Adam Smith, has argued the point nearly in the ſame manner, without ſpeaking ſo bluntly. If foreigners are hindered from coming to ſell, they cannot always, ſays he, afford to come to buy; becauſe

bec ıſe, if they come without a cargo, they muſt loſe the freight from their own country. By thus diminiſhing the number of ſellers, we thereby leſſen the number of buyers, and may in this manner be obliged not only to buy foreign goods dearer, but to ſell our own cheaper, than if there was a more perfect freedom of trade. Yet, as defence, continues this judicious writer, is of more importance than riches, the act of navigation is perhaps the wiſeſt of all the commercial regulations of England; though *it is not favourable to foreign commerce, or to the growth of that opulence which may ariſe from it*

The reaſonings and authority of theſe able writers were placed in this broad light, in order to abate if poſſible, the confidence of thoſe, who expect that the monopoly of the freight and factorage created by the act of navigation, is to make Britain ſuperlatively rich; and to expoſe the raſhneſs of any man, who can be ſo ill adviſed as vehemently to maintain*: That *The depreciation of landed*

* See Lord Sheffield on the Iriſh trade.

landed eſtates, and the ruin of ſtock holders, and of public credit, would be among the certain conſequences of what?—of allowing Britiſh ſubjects to ſend in Britiſh ſhips, from Ireland to Britain, any little ſurplus of American products, that may remain after the domeſtic conſumption of Ireland may be ſatisfied. For this can be the ſole effect of the propoſed regulations. The truth then is, that the vaſt augmentation of the riches of Britain, during the effluxion of the laſt hundred years, did not ariſe from the act of navigation, but, in ſpite of this law; which was enacted for a quite different and more valuable purpoſe, namely, the naval defence of the country.

But, let us inquire a little more minutely how the propoſed regulation would probably affect the planters, or producers of Weſt India goods, in the firſt place, and the people at large, or the conſumers in the ſecond place.

The monopoly, by which all the products of the Colonies were reſtrained for ſale to Britiſh markets, has been always complained

complained of by the planters, becauſe it plainly leſſened the price of their ſugars, and other products, by narrowing the market; and by excluding conſequently a number of buyers. And the planters, as it was natural, conſtantly endeavoured to procure a relaxation of the monopoly, and thereby to augment the number of their cuſtomers. The conſumers were equally injured by the monopoly, whereby they were confined to one ſet of ſuppliers, by the excluſion of foreign ſugars, which neceſſarily raiſed the price. The Weſt India planters had the addreſs to procure, in 1738, a law* for allowing them to ſend their ſugars to every market in Europe, firſt in Britiſh *built* ſhips, and afterwards in Britiſh *owned* ſhips, for a limited time, which will expire in September 1785. Out of this law Ireland was ſtill excepted. By thus enlarging the markets, and gaining a new ſet of cuſtomers, it was expected, that the value of the commodity would be raiſed. Under this

* 12 Geo. 2. ch. 30. 15 G. 2. ch. 33. 18 G. 3. ch. 45.

this law, the ſugars, which had been ſent firſt to Hamburgh (for example) might be afterwards ſent to Peterſburgh. This too was beneficial to the planter, becauſe he was thereby enabled to try another market. Now, it would have been ſtill more beneficial to have ſent the ſugars alſo to London, when this great market happened to be the higheſt of all, had the law allowed him to do ſo.

It is worth while to conſider, what would be the effect were we to enlarge the beforementioned law, ſo as to enable the Britiſh planter to bring his ſugars, which he may have ſent to foreign ports, from thence to London in Britiſh ſhips. If we could provide, by whatever means, that foreign ſugars ſhould not mingle with our own, the intereſt of the planter would by ſuch a meaſure be promoted by having another chance of ſale. The intereſt of Britiſh conſumers would be ſomething promoted, by having a greater quantity of goods brought to the domeſtic market. And the intereſt of the public would be alſo promoted by the employment

ployment of a greater number of Britiſh ſhipping and ſailors. Add to which, that if even *foreign* ſugars were by this means mingled with Britiſh ſugars; the intereſt of the conſumers would be ſtill more promoted, by lowering a little the price of the commodity; and the public by the ſtill greater number of Britiſh ſhips, which would probably in this caſe be employed.

If it was advantageous to the planter to be permitted to ſend his ſugar to every port in Europe, [except to thoſe of Ireland; he was ſurely allowed an additional advantage, when the ports of Ireland were alſo opened. If it would be advantageous to the planter, the conſumer and the public, to admit Britiſh ſugars, which had been ſent in Britiſh ſhips to Hamburgh or Peterſburgh to be re-ſhipped in Britiſh ſhips to Britain; it would be equally advantageous to the planter, to conſumers, and the public to allow Britiſh ſugars to be ſent in Britiſh ſhips from Ireland to Britain; which is the point that was to be proved.

Yet,

Yet, ſome of the Weſt India planters, though not all of them, have reſolved, that allowing their own ſugars to be re-ſhipped in Britiſh veſſels to Britain, after being firſt landed in Ireland, would enable the Iriſh to ſmuggle French ſugars into Ireland firſt and into Britain afterwards. Were this objection founded in probability it would doubtleſs juſtify the reſolve as to the planters, though the conſumers may ſtill wiſh to get any ſugars at the cheapeſt rate. It ought however to be remembered, that the French government does not wink at the ſending clandeſtinely of ſugars from the Weſt Indies as they allow brandies to be ſent from Dunkirk. We know, that in order to enforce rigorouſly the monopoly of their own ſugars the French have lately ſeized ſome of the veſſels of the American ſtates, which they equally exclude, for attempting a practice that cannot eaſily be concealed. Let us however ſuppoſe, that the French governors were to ſhut their eyes and the French guard-ſhips to retire from their charge, it may be aſked, what the Iriſh ſmuggler can

carry to tempt the French planters to ſell their ſugars clandeſtinely? Iriſh linens cannot be ſold ſo cheap in the French iſlands as the French linens can, becauſe they are not ſo good. Salted proviſions may be always bought in open market. And conſequently the Iriſh ſmuggler can carry nothing to the French Weſt Indies that would purchaſe half a lading of ſugars, conſidering how much they have lately riſen in their price, and how much delay, riſque, and expence there muſt be in putting them on board. Let us ſuppoſe the ſmuggled cargo ſafely arrived on the Iriſh coaſt, would the ſmuggler meet with no Cuſtom-houſe cutters at ſea and no Cuſtom-houſe officers on ſhore. Here they would meet with Cuſtom-houſe officers as vigilant and faithful, as they are any where to be found, as we might ſuppoſe from the late ſeizure of an Eaſt India ſhip, if the fact were not acknowledged by the whole mercantile world. Whether after all this riſque and trouble the ſmuggler could underſel the fair trader in England, or

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in Ireland, is a point that ought to be conſidered by both parties.

It ought to be moreover remembered, that all this ſcene of ſmuggling may be acted as the law now ſtands, perhaps more eaſily than if all doubts and obſtructions were removed from legal intercourſe. The act of the 12 George III, which is ſuppoſed to prohibit the ſending of ſugars from Ireland, was virtually repealed by Mr. Fox's law of 1783, as far as it was to operate in Ireland, tho' it continued in force as far as it was to operate in Britain. For any thing therefore, there is in that act (12 George III.) ſugars may be cleared from the Cuſtom-houſe in Ireland; though they cannot be entered in the Cuſtom-houſe in Britain: The ſhip may ſail for Britain; but ſhe cannot come into port: ſhe may hover in the channel, having a legal clearance on board: and ſhe cannot conſequently be ſeized by the cutters. If a law were to be made on purpoſe to furniſh occaſions to the ſmugglers, could any more favourable be given than thoſe already given, by the preſent ſtate of doubt and diſtraction. To remove theſe doubts and diſtractions is one of

of the propoſed regulations. If ſugars are ſometimes ſmuggled from the French Weſt Indies to the Britiſh by the planters, and afterwards ſhipped as their own, the planters themſelves ought to look to ſuch avaricious practices.

Let us aſſume then, ſince it has been well nigh proved, that to ſmuggle ſo unwieldy and waſteful an article as ſugar, would be impoſſible, we may inquire, if in this caſe, it would be contrary to the intereſt of the grower to allow ſuch ſugar to be imported in Britiſh ſhips from Ireland to Britain, after it had been landed in Ireland: If he is a reſident planter he can only diſpoſe of his crop by ſale or conſignment, ſince barter is not practiſed. The Iriſh trader, who knows, that he cannot, after the home market is ſupplied, ſend the ſurplus to the beſt market, cannot afford ſo much for the goods, as if he knew that the vent was altogether free. Every detriment conſequently, which is thrown in the way of him who buys to ſell to the conſumer, is a diſadvantage to the producer. And it muſt ever be for the benefit of the grower to have many markets and various buyers,

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in order to have the convenience of competition. The planter who does not feel this to be his true intereſt does not know his intereſt.

On the other hand, if the grower inclines to conſign his ſugars, what ought to be his wiſh? to have his inclinations checked by a monopoly, or left free to range in queſt of buyers; to have all the world before him, or to be confined to a ſingle port. The Weſt Indians were once confined to this iſland alone for the ſale of their ſugars. We have read of *the moans of the plantations*, on this account. The Weſt Indians *moaned* till they were allowed to ſend their ſugars almoſt to every market in Europe. They *moan* now, becauſe they are offered another chance, for another market. We have read too of a people, who were offered freedom, yet refuſed it.

Leaving the planters to find out their true intereſt in this buſineſs we may be allowed to attend a little to the intereſts of that reſpectable body of men, the Weſt India merchants. Their intereſt in theſe propoſals is

ſurely

ſurely very plain: If the ſugars are ſent (as by law they now may be) to Ireland, and are there ſold to the conſumer, the commiſſion muſt be loſt to the Britiſh merchants: If ſuch ſugars ſhould be thence ſent to the better markets of Britain, the Britiſh merchants muſt neceſſarily get the commiſſions with the other advantages of the conſignment. But it is inſiſted on behalf of theſe very merchants by Lord Sheffield, that this method of getting the conſignment, (for the noble author is not arguing againſt ſending the ſugars directly from the place of their growth to Ireland) would *greatly weaken the ſecurity*, which they have on Weſt India eſtates for money advanced: That is, in other words, the giving of the traders another chance to get the produce of the eſtates into their own poſſeſſion is to weaken their ſecurity. But, pray what is this ſame ſecurity? The paper and wax; or the judgement of law upon breach of contract; or laſt, though not leaſt, the *intereſt* of the planter himſelf to continue his correſpondence, in order by his punctuality

lity to engage the merchant to accept his future bills, and to ſend him ſupplies, during every ſeaſon: the *intereſt*, which the planter has to tranſmit his produce to the greateſt market, rather than to the ſmalleſt one.

On behalf of the whole nation the noble author objects, that admitting the before-mentioned ſurpluſſes of ſugar from Ireland would deliver up the Weſt India trade to the Iriſh. If we ſift this objection, we ſhall find, that though it means well it means little. The intereſt of the Britiſh people, or conſumers of ſugars, conſiſts in getting them at the cheapeſt rate from any place. The advantage of the planters, or producers, conſiſts, in having the world for their market. And the benefit of the merchant, or middleman between the producers and conſumers, ariſes out of his commiſſion from both parties. The argument, as far as it goes to ſhew, that the Britiſh merchant would probably loſe his commiſſion, had been a good argument againſt Lord North's meaſure, whereby he delivered the ſugars to the Iriſh: But, the Iriſh having actually got

got poſſeſſion of the ſugars, the noble author's argument comes four years too late: For, it has been plainly ſhewn to be the joint intereſt of planter, merchant, and conſumer, to draw as many Sugars from the Iriſh as they poſſibly can.

Never the leſs the propoſed meaſure (not Lord North's meaſure, or Mr. Fox's meaſure) is to transfer (according to the noble author) not only the whole Weſt India trade, but the American trade, and the tobacco trade too. But, by what means? The noble author conveys the whole mercantile capital of Europe to Ireland. In her Weſtern ports the European traders, it ſeems, are to aſſemble; to build ſhips, where there are no wood or iron; to inſtruct the ignorant; to invigorate the indolent: and by a ſingle movement to change the antient manners of a whole people.

But, to be ſerious (if it be poſſible when ſuch arguments are brought forward on ſuch an occaſion;) it may be proper once more to remark, that though the mercantile capital both of Britain and Ireland are faſt

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accumulating; the greateſt capital, ſkill, and diligence muſt cauſe that capital to accumulate by the wideſt ſteps:—That Britain is in actual poſſeſſion of the Weſt India trade, the American trade, and the tobacco trade; of which ſhe can not be deprived, unleſs ſhe ſits down, in ſecurity and idleneſs. But, he knows little of the world who thinks, that the affairs of the world can ever ſtand ſtill: mercantile capital muſt either be employed, or it muſt be realized. The Britiſh farmer muſt continue to follow the plow, the weaver muſt drive the ſkuttle, the ſailor muſt ſet the ſail, and the trader muſt actuate all.

In the Weſt India trade England (excluſive of Scotland) has eight hundred veſſels conſtantly employed, whoſe regiſtered tonnage may be ſtated at a hundred thouſand tons, but whoſe real burthen amounts to about one hundred and thirty thouſand tons. When will Ireland poſſeſs ſuch a Weſt India fleet? She cannot buy the ſhips of America, Holland, or Hamburgh, becauſe the act of navigation, being one of her fundamental laws, no more

allows her, than it permits Britain, to own ſhips of foreign built. If ſhe builds in Britain ſhe will thereby promote a very valuable manufacture. And if ſhe ſhould build them at home ſhe would by this means withdraw capital from ſome other branch of buſineſs, perhaps more beneficial to her and diſadvantageous to this country. Till Ireland then ſhall have procured ſuch a fleet, by whatever means, Britain muſt enjoy the freights both out and home. It is therefore in vain to ſay, that Ireland can victual and navigate cheaper than Britain, till ſhe has veſſels to victual. It is to as little purpoſe to argue againſt the moſt authentic facts, That her ports lying on the Atlantic Ocean muſt be nearer than thoſe of England to the American coaſt; and that by this means and the lowneſs of ſailors wages ſhe can perform the Weſt India voyage at lower inſurance and at cheaper freight: It is a well known fact, that the Weſt India freights both out and home are conſtantly regulated by the mutual agreement of the traders and planters at ſatisfactory terms to both parties:

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It is a fact, that the inſurers regarding the Weſt India riſques as deſireable ones aſk no higher premium either out or home, whether the ſhips call at Cork, or not: It is a fact too, that the freight and inſurance from Cork are the ſame with thoſe from London, whatever may be the greater ſpeculative riſque. The Iriſh ſhipping cannot therefore enter into competition with the eight hundred ſhips beforementioned, which muſt neceſſarily go out for the ſake of the homeward freights; and muſt therefore often go one half empty; ſince the whole cargoes outwards are not ſo bulky as one half of the cargoes homewards. Who then can ſeriouſly dread the rivalry of the Iriſh in reſpect to freights for ages to come? A little experience will teach the Iriſh, as it has already taught Britiſh ſhip-owners, that capital cannot be employed in a leſs productive buſineſs, than it would be in owning Weſt India ſhips.

In ſoliciting conſignments, the Iriſh will find great diſcouragements from being thus excluded from freights, which depend ſo

much on intereſt and favour. But, there is in fact, ſuch a chain of connexion, between the planter, merchant, and ſhip-maſter, wherein all their intereſts are bound, that it cannot be broken even by much greater advantages. The planter who has long conſigned his ſugars to his correſpondent in London, or Briſtol, will therefore continue to conſign them ſtill. The planter who reſides in London, will not probably ſend his produce to Dublin for ſale. Nor, will any planter, who knows, that in Ireland the Weſt India products are ſold in ſmall quantities, on ſix months credit, while in Britain they are ſold by the whole cargo, payable in two months, ever prefer that market, where there are the longeſt credits, and the greateſt riſques. It is ſaid, though perhaps with ſome degree of exaggeration, that ſeven-eights of the Britiſh Weſt Indies belong, either mediately or immediately, to perſons who reſide in Britain. Were this fact true to a much ſmaller extent than is here repreſented, little ſugar would ever be conſigned to Ireland, becauſe few men chooſe to ſend

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their property out of their ſight, when they may have it to a greater advantage under their daily contemplation. A few cargoes have indeed been conſigned from the Weſt Indies to Ireland, during the laſt four years, by ſpeculative men: But the account of ſales were ſuch, both as to price and payment, as not to countenance many repetitions of ſimilar adventures.

If the propoſed relaxation were granted to the deſires of the Iriſh, it is apparent from the foregoing reaſonings and facts, that Ireland muſt carry on the Weſt India trade, however free, under every diſadvantage. They would have as conſtant competitors the Britiſh traders, who have greater capitals and correſpondence, who have eſtabliſhed connexions and a wider market, and who are already in poſſeſſion of the field of buſineſs. The Iriſh would have a competition both in the Weſt Indies and Europe, of a more dangerous kind: If the Iriſh, like the merchants of Glaſgow, ſhould be obliged for want of conſignments and orders, to carry on this trade chiefly on their own account, they would

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have the Engliſh merchants for competitors in every market, as *factors*. And it requires no great knowledge to foretel, whether the *mere merchant*, or the *mere factor* would probably riſe or fall, in carrying on ſuch a traffick. With all theſe diſcouraging proſpects before them, the Iriſh have made a beginning. In their ſmall two decked veſſels, they have ſent to the Weſt Indies proviſions, and other products of paſturage, linen, and ſome leſſer manufactures, to be ſold at the beſt price on their own account. Every one muſt ſee, that this is a very hazardous trade: For, almoſt every article, which the Iriſh can bring, is imported by the planters for the ſupply of their own eſtates; who will only buy of them when it happens that their own ſtores have failed: The proviſions, and other products of paſturage, are liable to a thouſand accidents in a ſultry climate. And the proviſion trade is therefore a moſt precarious trade, as we might infer from reaſon, if we had not experience to guide us.

But

But, when the Iriſh cargoes are all thus diſpoſed off another difficulty will immediately occur. The product of their ſales will not be ſufficient to buy more Weſt India goods, conſidering their greater value, than will load the one half of the Iriſh veſſels. They muſt draw bills for the balance that ſhall be wanting; for which they muſt find an indorſer, at the expence of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and which muſt be drawn on London, where all Weſt India payments are made, or they will be charged $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more as the difference of exchange. Having brought the Weſt India goods, loaded with all theſe diſadvantages, to Ireland, the Iriſh trader will there meet the Britiſh merchants as competitors, who may have brought ſimilar cargoes directly from the Weſt Indies, or indirectly from Britain.

Owing to the difficulties before-mentioned the Iriſh have yet made no great progreſs during the five years freedom of their Weſt India trade; as we may obſerve from the following ſtatement *:

* Iriſh Cuſt. Houſe accounts.

A comparative account of the ſugar and rum, which were imported into Ireland, during the ſubjoined years, ending the 25th of March,

Sugars Muſcavado.

	1781 cwt.	1782 cwt.	1783 cwt.	1784 cwt.
From the Weſt Indies	7,384	18,681	33,870	27,492
From Britain	130,056	132,754	99,210	160,083

Rum.

	1781 gal.	1782 gal.	1783 gal.	1784 gal.
From the Weſt Indies	69,473	175,053	297,047	153,592
From Britain	197,832	99,219	129,951	944,479

Sugar and rum may be regarded as the repreſentatives of the Weſt India products for the purpoſe of this compariſon. The importations from Britain were probably ſomewhat affected by the Iriſh diſtractions. It is ſurely reaſonable to infer, from the foregoing facts and arguments, that the importations to Ireland will continue nearly in this ſtate for half a century to come. It is obvious however, that Ireland muſt ſupply her own

conſumption, before ſhe can ſmuggle or ſend any ſugars to Britain. And when in the long progreſs of her trade ſhe ſhall have any ſurplus to ſpare ſuch ſugars muſt be ſent to Britain loaded with an additional expence of 3s 6d to 4s per cwt. including Cuſtom-houſe fees, inſurance, freight and factorage.

How far the allowing of the importation of theſe ſurplus ſugars in Britiſh ſhips would give the American commerce to Ireland, is a queſtion which may now be eaſily anſwered. We may all remember the prophecies that were uttered, as to the loſs of that trade from the revolt of the colonies firſt, and from the independence of the United States afterwards. We have all ſeen the race which was run ſoon after that event, by the commercial nations of Europe for the golden prize of the American trade. While the conteſt was yet undecided, it was inſiſted on behalf of the ultimate ſucceſs of Britain: That the ſkill and capital of the Britiſh manufacturers were ſuch as to enable them to give the American traders better penny-

worths and longer credits than any other tradeſmen in Europe: And that the Americans, being at once regardful of their intereſt and in want of capital, would neceſſarily come to the warehouſe where they could get the beſt and cheapeſt goods, with the longeſt time to pay for them. No one urged theſe and ſimilar reaſonings with more efficacy than Lord Sheffield, in a pamphlet, which gained him ſome praiſe, by entailing on Britain the American trade: It is only to be lamented, that the noble author ſhould have ſo ſoon found cauſe to dock the entail, and to ſettle the American commerce on Ireland. The event of the before-mentioned race is now univerſally known. Britain has engroſſed the American trade to a degree which is almoſt beyond belief. The Spaniſh merchants, who engaged in the American trade, have failed. The French American merchants have failed. A few Britiſh merchants have failed. And have the Iriſh had no failures among the traders who engaged in the American commerce?

Experience

Experience hath now determined ſeveral doubtful points, in our commercial concerns, that no argument could have done. It was foretold, that the French would, from the revolt, engroſs the whole tobacco of Virginia and Maryland. Yet, though the farmers general ſent a proper agent to Virginia, who has alſo failed, and though they are ſupported by the public money; they are now buying tobacco in London. And is it likely that the Iriſh can engroſs the whole tobacco trade, greatly inferior as they are even to the French in opulence and ſkill, activity and addreſs? The Iriſh have not yet ſupplied their own wants: Till they acquire all theſe qualities in a higher degree they cannot ſupply the wants of others with any foreign product. It is London, which, from the vaſtneſs of her market for every luxurious and every uſeful article of traffick, muſt for ages be the American mart, without ſome accident that no ſagacity can foreſee, or prudence prevent,

But, it is ſtill pertinaciouſly urged, that by granting this boon to the Iriſh, we

ſhould relinquiſh *the monopoly* of the plantation trade, which was confined to Britain by the act of navigation. This had doubtleſs been an objection, though not a weighty one, to Lord North's conceſſions of the colony trade to Ireland: But, this can be no objection to allowing Britiſh ſubjects to import in Britiſh ſhips from Ireland to Britain ſuch ſurpluſſes of American products as had not been conſumed by her. It was doubted formerly by ſome, whether this monopoly ought to be conſidered as an evil, or a good: That it is an evil rather than a good has been ſhewn very clearly by Dr. Adam Smith. Every monopoly is ſaid to be more favourable to the few, than to the many: By yielding a greater profit to thoſe who are favored by it than they otherwiſe would gain, the monopoly, it is argued, forces a greater portion of mercantile capital within its operation, then otherwiſe would go there: That by this means capital is often withdrawn from domeſtic manufactures or from a neighbouring trade of Europe into a more diſtant commerce, which is leſs under our eye:

eye: That of conſequence the monopoly of the plantation trade oppreſſed every other commercial buſineſs which was unconnected with it: And that by theſe Operations the American trade became a diſeaſe in our commercial policy, like thoſe unnatural tumours in the human body, which often occaſion lameneſs and death. The American trade formerly and the plantation trade now are certainly very advantageous to this kingdom: It is only doubted, whether the *monopoly* of that trade, which is a diſtinct thing, be a deſireable object.

But, let us ſuppoſe, in oppoſition to theſe reaſonings and to that authority, that the monopoly is a good rather than an evil, it may be worth while to inquire, whether Ireland was originally excluded from it by the act of navigation. The great object of this famous law was to exclude, alien men and foreign ſhips from trading with our colonies. This regulation was plainly intended for the benefit of every part of the dominions of the crown: The colonies were allowed to trade with each other: Ireland

land was in the ſame manner admitted by the act of navigation * itſelf to the moſt unlimited freedom of trade, with all the plantations, till afterwards excluded, more by private reſentment † than by public policy. The continental colonies from that epoch to the period of the revolt were allowed to carry ſugar from the Britiſh Weſt Indies into their own ports and to ſend them from thence to England. From the Act of the 23d Charles II. Ireland could not import Sugars from the plantations, and conſequently was not permitted to ſend ſugars from her own ports to Britain. The colonies which were thus allowed this right maintained no military eſtabliſhment: Ireland who was denied this right did maintain a military eſtabliſhment, which was applied

* See 12 Cha. II. ch. 18.

† The revenge of St John for an affront in Holland is ſaid to have given riſe to the act of navigation, during the Commonwealth: It was in the ſame manner, the individual reſentment of the profligate Shaftsbury againſt the virtuous Ormond, who then governed Ireland, that gave riſe to almoſt all the reſtrictions of the Iriſh trade, during Charles IIds reign, ſome of which appear at preſent perfectly ridiculous. [See Hume's Hiſtory of that period.]

applied to the general defence. The colonies, which were thus indulged, have always required an enormous expence to defend them: Ireland, who was thus excluded, has occaſioned no particular expence; at leaſt peaceable Ireland has not, whatever diſtracted Ireland may have done. New Brunſwick and Nova Scotia, may even now re-export Britiſh ſugars to Britain, yet Britain pays their civil liſts. But, Ireland, who pays her own civil liſt and ſupports moreover a great army, is denied this convenience. If this conduct was unequal and unjuſt formerly, can the continuance of a ſimilar conduct be wiſe and equitable now? Thus Ireland was entitled originally to all the benefits of the monopoly; and is even now entitled to all the benefits of the monopoly, except the convenience of re-ſhipping Britiſh Sugars in Britiſh ſhips to Britain; the denial of which is not of any great conſequence to this country, whatever it may be to her.

2. From the foregoing conſiderations we are led ſecondly to inquire, whether the propoſed

poſed indulgence has any tendency to impugn or weaken that principle of the navigation act, which has certainly created ſo many ſhipping and ſeamen, the more valuable, as they belong to ourſelves. If the propoſal were to allow *foreign* ſhips to bring the ſurplus ſugars of Ireland to Britain; the circumſtance of their being foreign ſhips and ſeamen would be a deciſive objection. Were it propoſed to confine the bringing over ſuch ſugars to ſhips, merely Iriſh; which had not been often declared by law, and admitted in fact to be Britiſh veſſels; this circumſtance had created a conſiderable objection. But the ſhipping and ſailors intended by the propoſal, being Britiſh ſhipping and ſailors, without exception, the propoſal can ſurely be liable to no great objection.

If therefore the propoſal ſhould be adopted, and in conſequence thereof many ſurpluſſes ſhould be ſent, more native ſailors would thereby be employed; and the principle of the act of navigation would therefore be ſtrengthened: If, on the other hand,

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it is probable, that few or no ſugars will be ſent from Ireland in half a century, then the object is not worth a conteſt.

The trade between the ſiſter kingdoms has grown up in leſs than a century, from the loweſt ſtate of depreſſion, owing to the reſtrictions of the reign of Charles II. to a very high point of magnitude, owing to our having gradually removed thoſe reſtrictions. We ſhall ſee this important truth in a very clear light from the following ſtatement:

		Value of Exports.	Value of Imports.
The amount of the trade between England and Ireland, according to a three years average ending with			
1695	was	£. 166,025	81,165
Ditto ending with 1783	was	1,873,236	1,427,191

It plainly required no great number of ſhips to carry on the trade between the ſiſter kingdoms, during King William's reign: And this trade certainly furniſhed very few ſeamen for the royal navy, during King William's wars, when they were ſo much wanted. It is equally apparent, that it muſt

have employed many ſhips to tranſport the vaſt cargoes of the years 1781-2-3: And it is equally plain, that the navigation, which was thus created, muſt have furniſhed many ſeamen for the public ſervice, during our late unhappy conteſts. Both the trade and the nurſery ſeem to be a new creation, ſince the beginning of the preſent century. If this creation was ſo much gain to the nation, with a view to its defence, to extend this creation ſtill further, with the ſame moſt important end, muſt be a good to be deſired; and to depreſs that creation, or narrow that nurſery, muſt be an evil to be avoided.

If we have the wiſdom, and the equity to open the ports of Ireland ſtill wider, by granting the little that is now deſired, we ſhall certainly ſtrengthen the principle of the navigation act, by increaſing the number of ſhips, and conſequently, the number of *native* ſeamen; which the Iriſh have been declared by law, and are acknowledged in fact to be. In proportion then as we ſhut the Iriſh ports, we enfeeble the ſalutary principle

principle of the navigation act, by doing that which muſt neceſſarily leſſen the number of ſeamen, who may be moſt eaſily engaged when they are very much wanted.

By thus promoting the public ſervice, Briſtol, Liverpool, and Whitehaven have ſurely nothing to fear on the ſubject of freights: For, their great numbers of return ſhips, ſtand a much better chance for employment than any Iriſh ſhips, which may be chartered on purpoſe: The veſſels which muſt neceſſarily return home, can afford to carry at a lower freight, than a veſſel which muſt fit out only for a ſingle voyage: And conſequently the Britiſh ſhip owners muſt overpower the Iriſh in every competition for freights; which muſt neceſſarily augment the number of Britiſh ſhips, without diminiſhing the actual number of Iriſh.

On the other hand, were the re-ſhipping of ſugars, as hath been propoſed, to augment the number of ſeamen in the ports of Ireland, without diminiſhing the number of veſſels in the ports of England, becauſe the preſent trade would probably continue as to them,

while the advantage in the competiton ſhall continue, nothing would ſurely tend ſo much to promote the public ſervice, during our wars, as having a great body of ſailors, who are bound to ſerve, in the ports of Limerick and Cork, Waterford and Dublin: For, theſe ports being nearer to Plymouth and Portſmouth, than Liverpool or Lancaſter, Whitehaven, or Greenock, the ſupernumerary ſailors of the Iriſh ports before mentioned could be more conveniently commanded than from the more diſtant Britiſh ports. The ſame obſervation equally applies to the whole navigation between the ſiſter kingdoms, as compared with longer voyages. In ſhort voyages the ſailors often return into port, and may therefore often be had: In more diſtant voyages the ſeamen ſeldom return, and conſequently can ſeldom be engaged in the public ſervice, when this ſervice may very much require their aid.

It was with a view to the uſefulneſs of theſe repeated voyages, between neighbouring harbours, that the navigation act excluded

cluded by an expreſs clauſe, alien ſhips and ſailors from carrying any merchandize from one port to another, in England and Ireland, or from theſe kingdoms to the circumjacent Britiſh iſlands. The navigation act then conſidered the home trade of Ireland as part of the coaſt trade of England, which has been ſo carefully preſerved as the moſt valuable nurſery for ſeamen. And indeed what can the whole navigation between the ſiſter kingdoms be deemed, but a coaſt trade, which ought to be extended by every rational meaſure that can be propoſed or thought of. Foreigners were excluded too from the trade of the Colonies upon the principle *of keeping up a firmer connexion, between the parent country and them.* Let us hope, that by granting the enlargement of navigation, which is now deſired by the Iriſh, it may be the efficacious means of ſtrengthening the union between the ſiſter kingdoms, which is ſo much for the intereſt and happineſs of both.

3. From conſiderations with regard to the naval ſtrength of the empire, it is proper

per to inquire briefly, in the third place, as to the queſtion, how far the public burdens of this country would be lightened at preſent, or leſſened in future, were the Iriſh propoſals adopted.

The revenue of every country is divided in modern times, into two kinds; 1ſt the income of every individual ſeparately, from whatever means: 2dly, the income of all the individuals collectively, which is called the public revenue, on the income of the ſtate. The private revenue of no country on earth ever accumulated faſter than the private revenue of this kingdom, during the laſt hundred years, which continues to accumulate abundantly at this moment. But, the public revenue, however great and productive it may be under late management, is depreſſed by many debts, funded and unfunded. It is apparent therefore, that the wiſdom of our counſels ought to be chiefly occupied in ſtrengthening the public revenue, which is thus feeble; leaving private incomes which are thus productive to the care of individuals, who are entitled to general

neral protection, without the particular inteference of the ſtate.

It is to be lamented, how often the ſpirit of the people is directed to improper objects. They have been well nigh ruined, in their public revenue, by being induced to clamour for commercial advantages. We were ſo abſurd as to ſettle colonies for the ſake of getting a nation of cuſtomers. We have ſpent hundreds of millions to enlarge and defend diſtant dominions to enjoy thoſe commercial advantages, which experience hath ſhewn are beſt enjoyed without any public expence. Yet, the ſame man, who, by his miſconduct and miſtakes, has almoſt beggered his country, in purſuit of the phantom of commercial advantages, continues to inſiſt, that we ought to riſque our all, in purſuit of commercial advantages.

While this nation conſtantly graſped at a ſhadow, almoſt every foreign power has been acquiring provinces which have yielded *public* revenue. But, what has Britain gained even from her moſt ſucceſsful wars? ſhe acquired diſtant deſerts which were diſadvantageous

tageous to this as an induſtrious and mercantile country, in two reſpects; 1ſt. Inſtead of yielding *public* revenue they required *public* ſupport at no ſmall expence for civil and military eſtabliſhments; 2dly, Commercial capital was conſtantly withdrawn from domeſtic induſtry, wherein it was employed to the greateſt advantage, to cultivate deſerts beyond the ocean, without adequate returns. With our ſad experience and preſent knowledge we may eaſily determine the queſtion, whether we ought to accept of any diſtant iſland, or country, however large, were it offered without an equivalent? For, we have ſeen, that it would require a civil liſt or government to be paid from the public revenue, which cannot be ſpared; and that it would drain the people of the mercantile capital which now gives employment to every induſtrious individual.

On the other hand, Ireland is directly the reverſe of ſuch an iſland, inhabited as Ireland already is, by a numerous people, brave, active and generous; who, at the annual expence of a million, ſupport a great civil and military

military eſtabliſhment; and who, without any apparent diminution of our capitals, are our yearly cuſtomers to the amount of nearly two millions. In ſuperaddition to theſe great advantages, which ought to be regarded as no ſmall equivalents for commercial benefits Ireland propoſes to appropriate the ſurpluſes of the hereditary revenue, as a fund for the more general purpoſe of protecting the Empire.

We ought to inquire into the nature and extent of this revenue before we determine, whether it is worth our acceptance. It conſiſts then of a Cuſtom-houſe duty, outwards and inwards, of an inland and inward exciſe: and of a tax, called hearth-money. It is obvious, that theſe taxes are of ſuch a nature as to have increaſed and to continue to increaſe with the populouſneſs, the induſtry, the trade, and opulence of the country. We have already ſeen how vaſtly the trade of Ireland has grown ſince the revolution in 1688. And from the following ſtatement we may have a very diſtinct view of the in-

 creaſe

creaſe of the hereditary revenue from that æra to the preſent time:

This revenue produced then, according to a five years average, ending with	1687	£.231.720
Ditto ending with - - -	1734	300,332
Ditto ending with - - -	1753	417,000
A ſeven years average ending with	1770	545,422
Ditto ending with	1777	543,818
The year ending with Lady Day	1784	659,000

A real ſtateſman would deſire no better document than this to judge of the progreſs in population, deligence, traffick, and wealth of any people. A real ſtateſman when he conſidered from what funds this increaſing revenue aroſe and how faſt it had augmented during a centry of oppreſſion, would eaſily determine with regard to the rapidity wherewith the ſame revenue muſt hereafter increaſe from the epoch of the freedom of Ireland, both commercial and political.

It is a curious fact in the hiſtory of our parties and debts, that when Walpole *eſtabliſhed the ſinking fund*, it became immediately the ſubject of ridicule to the faſhionable orators and wits of the times. Yet, every

Every one knows, that the ſinking fund, which when created in 1717 did not yield ſo great a ſum as the hereditary revenue of half Ireland, produced in 1781 rather more than three million, till it was almoſt diſſipated by the unproductive taxes of a great financier, for which it was ſecurity. Ridicule therefore is not always the teſt of truth.

He muſt indeed have little wit and leſs wiſdom, who can ſuppoſe, that the hereditary revenue, whatever may be its produce, is the only public income, which Ireland contributes for defraying the expence of defending the empire, of which Ireland forms ſo great a part. Ireland maintains as great a land army as Britain does. The military eſtabliſhments of the ſiſter kingdoms form the military defence of each other. One Generaliſſimo commands both, who may direct the operations of both for the protection of each. If Ireland maintained fewer troops, Britain muſt maintain more: If Ireland ſupported none, Britain muſt double hers. The reduction of military

eſtabliments of every kind is in the preſent ſtate of the revenue of Britain perhaps the beſt œconomy. If Ireland, by maintaining her millitary eſtabliſhment to the full extent, facilitates this reduction and œconomy in favour of Britain ſhe thereby contributes poſitive income. In this manner do foreign powers calculate the conjoint forces of the ſiſter kingdoms. It can never be prudent in either to convince the world, by unreaſonable deſires on either ſide, that we are a divided people, whoſe armies are ſeparate, and whoſe intereſts are diſtinct.

We all remember how much it has been regretted, that the Congreſs petition, which was delivered by Mr. Penn, was not received and conſidered as the beginning of reconcilement. But, the authority of the Congreſs was diſputed by ſome, and their terms were regarded by many as deſignedly general and ſtudiouſly ſubtle. On the other hand, the Iriſh propoſals come from the only power which could legally ſend them;

and

and theſe propoſals are detailed into ſuch diſtinct reſolutions, that their meaning is obvious and their purpoſe is plainly avowed. Let us not have it to lament hereafter, that we oppoſed ſuch propoſals captiouſly, much leſs that we rejected them haſtily.

Whoever recollects what diſtraction prevailed in Ireland only a twelve month ago, and compares them with the preſent repoſe, muſt be of opinion, that much has been ſkilfully done. To obtain ſuch propoſals, from ſuch an authority, with the declared intention of finally ſettling the commercial affairs of the ſiſter kiugdoms, on liberal principles of mutual advantage, was doubtleſs to advance many ſteps towards a deſirable object. Let us be cautious how we undo that which has already been done; far leſs how we by any means drive Ireland into freſh diſtractions, in queſt of old remedies, and new pretenſions. It cannot ſurely be the intereſt of any claſs of men among us, to ſee agreements of non importation again entered into by the Iriſh populace, or protecting duties once more impoſed by the Iriſh

Iriſh parliament. The manufactures ought to recollect, how much they were baffled by ſuch agreements before: The merchants would do well to remember, a recent example of commercial connexions of great extent, being wholly cut off by ſuch aſſociations alone. Every wiſe man muſt be of opinion, that peaceful and induſtrious Ireland is a mine of riches, and a tower of ſtrength to Britain: That diſtracted Ireland would be her weakneſs in war, and her bane in peace. To prevent ſuch apprehenſions in future, theſe propoſals have been ſubmitted to parliament, only as part of a plan of ſyſtematic government, which can alone tie the ſiſter kingdoms more cloſely together. The adoption of this plan bids fair to inſure mutual confidence, and laſting good will. The rejection of theſe propoſals would lead to ills that cannot all be foreſeen, but would be all deplored hereafter.

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